



# Photography as Prayer



*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands ... They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4)*

## PHOTOGRAPHY IS AN INVITATION

We are hungry for wonder and thirsty for a deeper relationship with Jesus. Photography is an invitation to quiet the noise of the world and reconnect us with the wonder and awe of creation. God's imprint is everywhere we look, drawing us into prayer as (with camera in hand) we seek His presence.

Through the lens, we begin to glimpse the radiance of God in the details, designs, and diversity of all He has created. As we notice God's extraordinary creativity, we begin to wonder:

- What do You want to show me today, Lord? What have I been missing?
- What was it like to create this (plant, bird, animal, rock)?
- What does it tell me about You?
- How can I capture the delight of Your creativity in a photo?
- What verse tells me something new about Your creativity?

## CONNECTING WITH GOD THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

Research shows that wonder cultivates humility. As our humility grows, our sense of wonder deepens. Camera in hand, we shift our focus from illness, loneliness, anxiety, and pain to beauty, gratitude, and prayer. It is the journey that opens our eyes to see what has often been in front of us all along. The camera simply sharpened our view.

Photography is a creative tool for connecting more deeply with God. It invites us to discover His imprint everywhere we look and offers an opportunity to grow in humility as we experience the wonder and delight of His creation.

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father, draw me into prayer through the wonder of Your creation. Remind me to be vulnerable and authentic in my creative expression, to experience joy in this journey, and to grow in gratitude with every click of the shutter. In Your Son's name, amen.



Chronic Joy

Visit [chronic-joy.org](http://chronic-joy.org) for more resources.



# Photography as Self-Care



*The most important commandment is this: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:29-31)*

Self-care begins with loving God and then loving others *as we love ourselves*. Creativity, especially in illness and pain, can feel almost impossible. Photography is a gentle, creative art that we can do anywhere—on a nature hike, through a car window, in the kitchen, on the front porch, or even from a hospital bed. All it takes is a little curiosity to find interesting shadows, colors, textures, objects, or people.

## A TWO-MINUTE INVITATION

Photography is as accessible as our cell phones. Wherever you are, set a timer for two minutes. Let your eyes wander around the room. Be curious. Notice the photos and knickknacks, the color of the walls, the textures, shadows, and light. What catches your eye? What makes it interesting? When the two minutes are up, pick up your camera and take a photo. Curiosity reminds us to notice what we see every day.

## THE ART OF ILLNESS: A 30-DAY INVITATION

The Art of Illness is a self-care invitation to creatively tell your story. The topics are a springboard to get you thinking. Make the list your own by deleting words that don't apply and adding some that do. At the end of the project, consider adding titles or captions to your photos and displaying them in a collage or in a photo book. A visual touchstone of a specific time in our illness story can shift our perspective, helping us better understand the losses we've faced and how we've grown and changed. It can also facilitate conversations with others, helping them better understand our illness and pain.

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|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Accessible | 11. Hope       | 21. Purpose       |
| 2. Anger      | 12. Illness    | 22. Rest          |
| 3. Awe/Wonder | 13. Joy        | 23. Scar          |
| 4. Celebrate  | 14. Kindness   | 24. Self-Care     |
| 5. Connect    | 15. Laughter   | 25. Shame         |
| 6. Courage    | 16. Loneliness | 26. Suffering     |
| 7. Create     | 17. Loss       | 27. Vulnerability |
| 8. Fear       | 18. Pain       | 28. Weakness      |
| 9. Generosity | 19. Peace      | 29. Worship       |
| 10. Gratitude | 20. Prayer     | 30. Worth         |

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